

Mt. Kailash: The Saga Dawa Festival and Guge Kingdom with Roger 15 -31 May 2024



This tour is being themed The Saga Dawa Festival and Guge Kingdom with Lake kora part... The highlight of our tour is the four-day kora (circumnavigation) of this auspicious mountain **and** in this itinerary are visits to two other of the holiest sites in Tibetan Buddhism – Lake Manasarovar and Thirthapury – in addition the Guge Kingdom and other precious locations!

We have carefully crafted this itinerary to support a balance between culture and walking the kora once the people have moved on. We have the experience and participate on the Saga Dawa the main Buddhist Festival at Mt. Kailash. All this during the period of the Saga Dawa month, in this time one circumambulation of the mountain is popularly considered to have the merit of a 100 thousand times on top of that to be purifying one life time. At time for the full moon (Buddha's day of enlightenment and para-nirvana) many more pilgrims than usual visit Kailash.



“Where Mount Kailash is considered the father-mountain, the active principle of skillful means, Lake Manasarovar is the mother-lake, the principle of transcendent reality.” J. Snelling – The Sacred Mountain



Holy Mount Kailash

The most sacred mountain in the Tibetan Buddhist world is considered by many to be the centre of the universe and to repeat, the crown of our planet.

Uncannily symmetrical, this remote and remarkable peak is located in the far west of Tibet, 1200 km from Lhasa. Mt. Kailash (6714m) is not only geographically one of the most important mountains in Asia, it is also the source of four major rivers, namely, the Indus, Sutlej, Karnali and Tsang Po which nourish Asia with water. In Sanskrit, Kailash means ‘luminous crystal’. Hindus believe Mt. Kailash to be the abode of Lord Shiva and his wife Parvati. For Hindus, to make the arduous pilgrimage to Kailash and have the darshan (divine view) of Shiva's abode is to attain release from the clutches of ignorance and delusion. Tibetan Buddhists call the mountain Kang Rinpoche, the ‘Jewel of Snow’, and regard it as the body mandala of Korlo Demchog and his consort, Dorje Phagmo (Chakrasambhava and Vajravarahi). A pilgrimage to this great sacred and magical landscape is the most precious of pilgrimages for both Tibetan and Indian people, a journey they hope to experience at least once in a lifetime.



“[It] is the ladder which simultaneously ascends to heaven and descends from heaven...and it thus has the same function as the ‘heavenly cord’ which links heaven and earth”.

G Tucci – The Religions of Tibet

Overview: We will visit one of the TOP 3 Trekking destinations in Nepal! It’s called Langtang... Gosaikunda is a significant place of interest a sacred Shiva pilgrim site where annually many Nepalese pilgrims visit. This on the Dhunche-Helambu trekking route. From Kathmandu we drive into the Langtang Region for acclimatization to the altitude, the journey ahead and one another – this will include walks to carefully selected sites that will support both our inner and outer journey. In Nepal Indra or Mingmar will lead the group and in Tibet Roger takes over into the core of this journey: an unhurried four-day circuit trek (kora) among Tibetan pilgrims around holy Mt. Kailash followed by a visit to Thirthapuri Hot Springs and monastery and the beautiful Lake Manasarovar. We enjoy silence and nature, spectacular panoramic views, as well as our group interactions.

Expedition or Inner Purification



All trips to Mt. Kailash have an expedition nature about them. This expedition, more than any tour – holds a deep sense of simplicity. Our journey, through vast open spaces, is likely to catalyze a variety of deep personal inner reflections and experiences. Long drives and simple accommodations require a lot of patience, tolerance and little expectation. In return, we will see some of the most untouched and beautiful landscapes, visit some of the most auspicious locations on the planet and are likely meet many genuinely kind and considerate people.

The reverence and silence held at many of the locations we will visit, will continuously give us the opportunity to return to our conscious awareness...and see where it wants to take us.

Special Tours: This tour has been organised in such a way that the effort of making all transport, accommodation and admin arrangements has been taken care of, giving you more personal time to prepare for, experience and enjoy your journey. We plan to see all the most important sights along the way, while you are taken care of by professionals: your tour leader, a Tibetan guide and drivers – and part of the tour with Sherpas.

Tour Leader Tibet part:

Roger Pfister, Swiss, born in 1960 has been based in Boudhanath, Kathmandu in Nepal since



1995. During this time, he has owned and operated Snow Jewel, leading expeditions to remote locations in Nepal and Tibet. In addition, he has worked for over five years as a volunteer for the British operated not-for-profit ROKPA Nepal. Roger has practiced extensively in both the Tibetan and Theravada traditions, completing annual Vipassana retreats in Thailand at Wat Ram Poeng and in India at Bodgaya and Sarnath with Christopher Titmuss. During his time in Nepal, he spent two years in study at Ka-Nying Shedrup Ling, the official seat of very venerable Chokyi Nyima Rinpoche, as well as Pullahari Monastery under the guidance of Khenpo

Tsultrim Gyatso Rinpoche. His inaugural trip to Mt. Kailash was during the spring of 1996 and since then he has made over 100 circuits of the mountain and 14 of Lake Manasarovar.

Nepal Part;

Indra Rai, one of our most experienced Sherpa guides, he will accompany you in the Nepal part and take care of you in the acclimatisation period. He is father of 4 and comes from the Everest region in over 20 years he has been in all remote locations in Nepal!



Group small Size: Minimum 7, maximum 12 people.

Duration: 17 days from May 15. – 31. 2024

Price: 18'400 CNY /US\$ 2520 / €uro 2370, (@ 7.7 to the Euro)

Single room mark-up 320Euro (in Nepal and Hotel – kora and Chiu not available)

Included: From Kathmandu drive in a private vehicle to Langtang region tea house trek with Indra and helpers. **In Nepal:** Permits; TIMS 20\$ & Langtang 35\$; Guide and porter for 5 days in the acclimatization part (you can give maximum 6kg to the porter the rest will stay in storage for the later part!

**Included Tibet:**

drive to Mt. Kailash, Lake Manasarovar Guge Kingdom and onwards to Kathmandu, with private transport (see itinerary); all permits and road tolls in Tibet; local guide, driver; all fees for sightseeing, Kailash circuit, grassland fee, Guge Kingdom; hotel in Kyirong x2, Paryang x2, Darchen, Thoeling x2 all other overnight stays in basic accommodation (pilgrim guesthouses).

Excluded: Tibet visa fee for Tibet 120\$ (USA 210\$); all Food; horse and horse driver for personal ride; porter at Mt. Kailash, cost in case of an emergency personal expenses; insurances; tips & gratitude's.

Nepal: visa for Nepal; All cost for food in Nepal 4,5 days while Tea house trekking (you will need about 20-25 USD per day); airport transfer and hotel in Kathmandu;

Note: We will be pleased to organise airport transfer or hotel booking in Kathmandu if needed (Please see booking mail).

Of course we cannot determine or foresee your spending behaviour, however, most people find that they need 100-150 CNY ca. 15-25 Euro/ day to cover food and drink. A porter on the kora, for those who need one, will cost an extra 330 CNY / day for 4 days (2023).



Itinerary – Short

May 12: Kathmandu, handover passport 10-16 AM for Tibet group visa.

May 13: Briefing with Roger, 11 AM.

May 14: Visa process / free day

The tour starts see here May 15.

Itinerary – Short Itinerary – Short

Day 01: Kathmandu – Langtang - Acclimatization / Tea house

Day 02: Langtang - Acclimatization / Tea house

Day 03: Langtang - Acclimatization / Tea house

Day 04: Langtang - Acclimatization / Tea house

Day 05: Kyirong / H.

Day 06: Paryang / H.

Day 07: Chiu Gompa Lake Manasarovar / G.H.

Day 08: Excursion walk part of Lake kora / G.H

Day 09: Saga Dawa Festival Mt. Kailash – Thoeling / H.

Day 10: Thoeling excursion to Guge Kingdom / H.

Day 11: Thirthapury – Darchen H. Mt. Kailash

Day 12-14: Kailash Kora / trekking / G.H.

Day 15: Darchen – Paryang / H.

Day 16: Paryang – Kyirong H.

Day 17: Rasuwa – Kathmandu end of service 31. May 2024

Fly back home 1. June,

We recommend to better stay one more day to digest the hole tour!



Itinerary - Detailed

Day 01: Early morning 5AM transfer by private transport to the Langtang area near Nepalese border, 134km, 4h drive, after food break 4-4,5 h walk up the mountain to 3270m strong day! Tea house trek.



Day 02: Rest and acclimatisation day and walk 1,5 h up to 3900M Laurebina Yak here a morning view from May 2018.



Day 03-04: During these two days we offer short treks, so that one can adjust to the altitude or simply rest & acclimatise. Day 4: afternoon, trek down to 3270m in about 1 h.



Day 05: Early morning 5 AM, 3-4h trek down to where we meet with our Bus/Car which will take us 9AM! Rasuwa border 1,5 h drive. **Tibet is 2h15 minutes ahead of time!** When crossing the border, we meet up with the Tibetan Guide/ Driver. We begin our overland journey in Tibet to Kyirong 2800m 1-2h drive, with a marvellous view over the Himalaya. We stay the night in Hotel.

Day 6: Kyirong to Paryang 350km 7-8h drive. In the morning we can visit the gompa with a famous Avolekitesvara statue, afterwards travelling on to Paryang. We drive through a magnificent hill landscape. Overnight Hotel.

Day 07: Paryang – Chiu Gompa (4'440m). 4-5h drive (230km). We cross several high passes and enter the high desert of Western Tibet – through beautiful landscape from Paryang to Chiu. After crossing the Mayumla pass (5216m), we drive along the shores of Gung Gyu Lake, before getting our first glimpse of holy Mount Kailash. We stay in a pilgrim guesthouse (public bath).

Day 08: We will walk part of the lake kora and visit Gosul Gompa a very beautify situated monastery above the lake, with a stunning view on the west shore of Lake Mansarovar. Walk around 4h

Day 09: We drive to Darchen 30km 1/2h and then onwards to Tarpoche for the biggest festival on Mt. Kailash! After lunch will drive to Thoeling Hotel.



(Spectacular views on way to Guge)

Day 10: Day excursion to Guge Kingdom, with the famous 9-11 century wall paintings. We can explore the ruins of the ancient kingdom and enjoy the ancient atmosphere. Afternoon visit Thoeling monastery ..



Day 11: Drive back to Darchen along the way visit Thirthapury - holy hot springs we walk the small kora around the idyllic monastery complex- this is considered one of the most important places and to have a real pilgrimage one should visit all 3 (Mt. Kailash/ Lake Manasarovar/ Thirthapury). Afterwards we head to Darchen and prepare for the kora. Hotel.

Day 12: Beginning of the Kailash kora. This is a medium trek (20km, 6-8h), slightly uphill.

From the south, we reach Tarpoche, the so-called center of the universe.

Then, we pass Chuku monastery (those who have lots of energy can go for a short visit) and the west face of Kailash. Our Guest house is right below Dirapuk monastery at 4900m with awesome views of Mt. Kailash's north face. Pilgrim G.H.



Day 13: Rest day at Mt. Kailash's north face for acclimatisation. Those who would like to can visit the Dirapuk monastery (famous yogi Gyalwa Gotsangpa meditated there in a cave for long time), make an excursion to the north face (2h), stroll into a side valley (1-2h) or simply enjoy Mt Kailash's power in the Dirapuk monastery at 4900m. Pilgrim G.H.

Day 14: This day is the core of the kora this is a difficult trek (18km, 8-10h), where we need the energy reserves built up from the day before. For the first 2-5h, we slowly ascend towards the Tara-Pass/Drölma-La (5630m). After a break we steeply descend to the valley (1-2h). From here it is another 3-4h slightly downhill to Zutulpuk monastery (4790m). Pilgrim G.H.

Day 15: This day is fairly easy (11km, 3-4h). We leave Zutulpuk monastery and hike slightly downhill back to Darchen where we have lunch in a simple restaurant. Then drive back to Paryang along Manasarovar Lake. Paryang Hotel

Day 16: Drive from Paryang back to Kyirong 7-8h. We drive over a high mountain pass (Zhongma) and descend the high desert and enter the green and lush vegetation. We will stay at the same place as on the way in. Hotel

Day 17: Kyirong to Rasuwa 20km drop to border 10 AM. We leave the Tibetan crew and cross the border and change to new vehicles and continue the 120km 4-6 h trip to Kathmandu **here ends the service!**

You can fly home 01. June at your convenience or extend your stay if you like.



Blue Sheep 2019 near Guge

General Information

Please Note

- We will not be responsible for extra cost incurred by landslides, road blockages and other weather-related or political problems.
- You are responsible for your own health. The itinerary has been designed to allow sufficient time for acclimatisation.
- Accommodation will occasionally be in shared rooms (small dormitories). During the Kailash kora we stay in tents for two people each. We assume your preparedness to share rooms/tents with others, regardless of gender.
- We reserve the right to increase the tour price should the Euro in relation to the Chinese Yuan (RMB) depreciate significantly.

Visa and Passport Information

Visa Nepal

Entry from Nepal, Nepalese visa is best applied upon arrival in Kathmandu. You will need a passport photo. At arrival you get a 30 day or 90 day multiple-entry visa valid from the date of entry. The visa costs US\$ 50 or US\$ 125, respectively.

Tibet Group Visa Nepal

Entering Tibet from Nepal: One can only travel by so called “Group visa” any other valid Chinese visa will be deleted by the Chinese embassy! We will obtain this for you in Kathmandu. For this, we need one passport photo and a completed visa application form. Please download, print and fill out: <http://snowjewel.com/visalinks.html>. The visa costs US\$ 120 in cash, payable upon arrival when handing over the passport. (US citizens must pay US\$ 210.)

Passport Validity

Minimum 6 months from date of entry.

Contact Information: Roger Pfister, Snow Jewel; P.O. Box 7003, Kathmandu, Nepal

Mt. Kailash

The Saga Dawa

15-31 May 2024

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May all beings be happy!